

Summaries

Otto Karl Werckmeister: The Work of Art between Work and Property

Since Marx and Engels never clarified the significance of art within their critique of capitalism and its revolutionary perspective, any concept of the work of art as part of Marxist theory must be devised afresh. It must be compatible with the terms of work and property within the theory of value. In the most recent phase of high-tech production and self-propelling finance capital, the two terms have come to reconfigure the relationship between works of art in the traditional sense and an art for the masses based on mass production.

Víctor Muñoz: Art Production and Mexican Social Movements of the 1970s. Interview by Jens Kastner

In Mexico of the 1970s new artist groups emerged. Known as »Los Grupos«, they tried to develop new languages of expression in their collective work, collaborating closely with political and social movements. In this interview, Víctor Muñoz, former member of the collective »Proceso Pentágono«, speaks about the 1968-movement, art and urban space, collective work and the criticism of representation.

Sonia Arribas: The Subject Herr Keuner: Towards a Brechtian Ethics

This article deals with a series of criticisms that have been launched against Brecht's Marxism. They all emphasize his incapacity to properly theorize the subject as ethical. His characters, some of his critics say, are disembodied figures. Others argue that his definition of class as the primary articulation of subject identity prevents him from developing a more complex intersection of needs and desires. The article offers an alternative to these criticisms, which is based on Brecht's Marxist conceptualization of the ethical subject in *Die Geschichten vom Herrn Keuner*. The author shows that it is precisely his Marxism that allows him to have a non-reductionistic account of ethics and the subject in the first place.

Darko Suvin: Reflections on and at a Tangent From »Bertolt Brecht und der Kommunismus«

A review of »Bertolt Brecht und der Kommunismus«, issue no. 1 (2007) of *Marxistische Blätter*, touching on most contributions. Three themes in it are considered, the presence of a »Kant-Zhdanovian« group of texts criticized, and the essays by Heuer and Haug found most useful for understanding a possible movement toward communism. At the end, a tangent on how to begin making sense of this term unpacks it as a locus, an orientation, and a horizon.

Thomas Metscher: Faust as »Global Player«. The New Paradigm of Faust Criticism

The essay deals with a change of paradigm in the interpretation of Goethe's *Faust* relevant not only for academic criticism but for the wider reception of the play. Traditional *Faust* criticism was dominated by a »positive« reading of the text, Faust seen as embodiment of cultural progress, the play as construct with an affirmative outcome. The Faust of present discourse is an entirely »negative« figure, criminal, capitalist, global player, embodiment of a process of domination terminating in totalitarian world control or global annihilation. Both paradigms, the essay argues, ignore the ambiguities and ironies of the text which exclude any definite »positive« or »negative« reading but require an approach taking the text's contradictory structure into account. The change of paradigm itself reflects changing ideological conditions in the course of the last century up to the present.

Ingo Lauggas: On the Ridge of History. Leonardo Sciascia and the Historical Novel

The article discusses the critical potential of a literary genre that played a seminal role in Italy despite its »objective disfavour for a genuine historical novel« (Lukács). For writer and essayist Leonardo Sciascia, a novelist ought to demonstrate a critical view on history, relate it to the present and make, though this narrative strategy, a statement on his own »social-historical moment« (Gramsci). In this manner, literature comes closer to the »truth« than historiography.

Dick Boer: A Good Beginning Makes a Good Ending. On the Theological Readability of Literature

To read ›theologically‹ means to read (profane) texts as documents of a ›not yet‹ that is in need of liberation. Such reading is not the ›privilege‹ of theology. On the contrary, biblical theology is part of an alliance with psychoanalysis: Non-theologians (Bloch, Benjamin, Freud) and theologians (Schneider, Ebach) are brought together as part of a project in which ›theos‹ clears the way for the ›non plus ultra‹ of a liberated humanity.

Daniel Atzori: Gramsci and the Arab Spring

Against the background of the hegemonic crisis of the Arab state, the thought of Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci provides valuable analytical categories for interpreting the emergence of the Arab Spring. A Gramscian theoretical framework highlights the need to articulate new hegemonies in order to challenge the social formations that are attempting to prevent the Arab Spring from developing into a social revolution.

Almut Waller and Mohamed Boukayo: »Revolution« at Any Cost? A Response to Gilbert Achcar's Positions on Libya

In a number of articles on the current situation in Libya (including one published in *Argument* 291) Gilbert Achcar uses humanitarian reasons to justify military intervention by NATO-forces. In so doing, he gets tangled up in several contradictions that are disclosed in this article. Achcar avails himself of the discourse on »humanitarian intervention« for promoting his underlying objective: the advancement of the revolutionary processes in the MENA-Region at any cost. However, the character of the uprising was significantly altered by the military intervention, as it empowered certain pro-Western factions, and eventually prevented qualitative and indeed revolutionary changes like those we are witnessing in Egypt and Tunisia.

Gerhard Hanloser: The Left and Anti-Semitism

The article discusses the accusation of anti-Semitism levelled against the party Die Linke (The Left Party in Germany). It exposes weaknesses and theoretical flaws of a study claiming to substantiate this accusation. With reference to a classical concept of anti-Semitism it demonstrates that Die Linke does not operate with elements of anti-Semitic ideology and propaganda. The article also underlines the differences between a critique of Israeli policies, anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism ignored by the critics of the alleged anti-Semitism in the Left. It concludes that the accusation is scientifically untenable and amounts to slander.

Manfred Herzer: Magnus Hirschfeld's Model of Intermediate Stages in Sexuality and Historical Materialism

Magnus Hirschfeld's doctrine of sexual intermediates, first proposed in 1896, is discussed as a concretisation of Marx's concept of the individual in capitalism. The paper discusses the degree to which fin de siècle German society had arrived at a stage of development that enabled the sexologist Hirschfeld to recognise the inadequacy of labelling individuals simply as men or women. Hirschfeld argued that no human being is identical to any other with regard to either sex or gender. Each individual is an irreproducible mixture of male and female features that can be represented as a point on a scale with a complete non-female man at one end and a complete non-masculine woman at the opposite end, each a fictitious extreme. Hirschfeld employs the expressions »male« and »female« based on everyday conceptions of his time. The article treats Hirschfeld's doctrine as an application of the concept of an isolated owner of commodities entering the capitalist marketplace to compete with others for the best price. Hirschfeld's position can be seen as an anticipation of contemporary queer theories and his work treated here as an ideological effect of advanced capitalist development.